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## Women's Center Newsletter (March 1988)

University of Maine Women's Center Staff

*University of Maine Women's Center*

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UNIVERSITY of MAINE

March 1988

# WOMEN'S CENTER

NEWSLETTER  
*"keeping abreast of women's concerns"*

## "HE/MAN" NO MORE

Recognizing the deleterious effects of sexist language on girls and boys, women and men, John Diamond, Maine State House Majority Leader, is currently sponsoring a bill to make the Maine State Constitution "gender neutral." According to Diamond, the document involves 102 uses of pseudo-generic language (often dubbed "he man language"). Luckily, at least one legislator is enlightened to the importance of language and its ability to construct and maintain our social reality. He man language hurts. Who reads the constitution? Well, frankly, probably few. But a gender-neutral document sends a clear message—to each of us. It demonstrates to the citizenry a legislative body that not only recognizes women, but includes them. It is, at least, a symbolic gesture. It is, at best, a vehicle for change.

On February 8, the committee handling the bill held a public hearing at the State Capitol. The proponents of the bill spoke citing the countless pieces of research from various disciplines, such as sociology, communication, and psychology that document the exclusive effect of sexist language. One woman, a student of pronouns. It was a powerful exercise in role reversal. Others read aloud examples such as, "Man's vital interests were life, food, and access to females" and "Man being a mammal, breastfeeds his young" illustrating the jarring contradictions embedded in the use of "generic" language. If "man" is truly a universal term,

*Continued on page 2*

SILENCE...  
ACT OF VIOLENCE  
PIERCING MY STOMACH,  
MY HEART,  
MY LUNGS.  
YOU WHO BELIEVE  
IN JUSTICE,  
COMMIT CRIMES  
OF OPRESSION  
DISHONESTY  
MANIPULATION,  
WHILE I INVEST  
WITH TRUST.

I'VE ENTERED YOUR LAND  
WITH INTERESTS OF  
CARING  
WHILE YOU'VE INVADED MINE  
FOR PROFIT!

K.W.S.

## "HER" STORY

The month of March has traditionally been chosen to celebrate women's history. The theme of the 1988 national celebration, commemorating women's contributions and achievements, is "Reclaiming the Past, Rewriting the Future."

At the University of Maine, because the academic calendar of March essentially consists of two weeks, March 21-28 has been earmarked for the UMaine Women's History Week. Numerous activities have been planned for the week, from two keynote speakers and discussion panels, to videos, exhibits and concerts. All events are open to the public and most events are free

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## "HE/MAN" NO MORE

*Cont. from page 1*

then why are the above sentences "funny" or unsettling, the proponents asked?

I attended the hearing. And as the proponents position took shape, I was affirmed. In fact, I was energized—with optimism, with

### ALIVE AND WELL

The Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center (MWWHC) is a feminist organization in Maine designed to meet the health needs of all women. From pre-teen years through the menstrual years and beyond, the intent of MWWHC is to encourage women to take control of the reproductive and sexual aspects of their lives. To this end, the MWWHC offers alternative health care including counseling on menstrual concerns and pregnancy issues, family planning, STD screening and treatment, as well as annual physical exams. In addition, the MWWHC provides educational programs, newsletters and speakers on women's health and sexuality issues.

Mabel Wadsworth, for whom the center is named, remains a long-time activist and leader in the women's health movement. She has been instrumental in achieving and maintaining reproductive rights for Maine women since the 1940s. The MWWHC embodies her vision of health care support and education concerning women's bodies.

The MWWHC provides a network of support, resources, and medical services that encourages a positive image for Maine women. In conjunction with the UM Women's Center, members of the MWWHC will be presenting information on-campus in the month of April. Please join us in sharing our common experiences and celebrating women's lives.

MWWHC: 700 Mt. Hope Avenue, Bangor  
- Open Fridays 12 - 4 pm

For appointment call: 947-5337

Public Meeting: March 15, 1988 at 7 p.m.,  
Bangor Public Library

Amy Gumprecht

hope. "I'm not the only one who bristles everytime I read he...him...man...mankind, ad nauseum," I thought.

Then the opponents stood up. My mind whirled. A coalition of men argued against the bill suggesting that the "constitution was made for free, white, male citizens, not for women. Women are subservient to men; that's God's will." Same old arguments. Same old paranoia. Is anyone listening to us?

The hearing ended and now the committee begins discussing the bill in something called "work sessions." They will debate the bill deciding whether it deserves a legislative vote. If it does, it will go before the Maine public as a referendum issue. Convincing the public, friends, of the importance and necessity of a gender-neutral constitution, will not be easy. But it will not be impossible.

We owe it to ourselves to be included. We owe it to each other to try.

So what do we do? Write. Write. Write these senators and representatives and tell them a gender-neutral constitution does matter.

*Senator John Tuttle*

*Senator John Baldacci*

*at State House Station #3,  
Augusta, ME 04333*

*Representative Donnell Carroll*

*Representative Dorothy Rotondi*

*Representative Bradford Boutilier*

*Representative Elaine Lacroix*

*Representative Robert Hussey, Jr.*

*Representative Cushman Anthony*

*Representative Alberta Wentworth*

*Representative Gary Bickford*

*Representative Theone Look*

*Representative Barbara Strout*

*at State House # 2*

*August, ME 04333*

Chris Bobel

**Women's Center Meetings  
Friday's 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
at the Maples**



RECLAIMING THE PAST, REWRITING THE FUTURE"  
WOMEN'S HISTORY WEEK, MARCH 21-26, 1988

Numerous activities ranging from two keynotes, to discussions to videos, to exhibits, to panels have been planned for the University of Maine Women's History Week.

All events are open to the public and most events are free. The commemoration of women and their contributions is sponsored by the Women in the Curriculum Program with support from various parts of the University such as the UM administration, the faculty, staff, students, various programs and services, colleges, and special funds.

The week offers a variety of events:

Monday, March 21

12:15 - 1:30 pm

Presentation: "19th Century Maine Women Authors." by Dorothy Healy, a founder of the Maine Women Writers Collection, Westbrook College.  
Sutton Lounge, Memorial Union

8 pm

Presentation: Keynote: "From Policy to Practice: Things We Never Knew About Women's Wages." by Alice Kessler-Harris, Professor of History, Hofstra University.  
101 Neville Hall; reception follows

Tuesday, March 22

12:15 - 1:30 pm

Presentation: "Nigerian Women in Agriculture." by Dorothy Hayes, painter. The paintings by Hayes have been printed into postcards, notecards, etc. They are being sold to raise money for food for Nigeria.

F.F.A. Room, Memorial Union

1:30 - 5:00 pm

Film/video Festival - topics to be announced

8 pm

Performance - "An Evening with the Roches." Three sisters who have performed extensively throughout the U.S. Admission  
Maine Center for the Arts

Wednesday, March 23

12:15 - 1:30 pm

Panel - "Where Have We Been, Where Are We Going."

Students from the Onward Program: Cheryl Gusha, Donna Messier, Laura Matilla, Pamela Noyes, Sherri Welts, and Brenda Wentworth.

Moderators: Joanne Green and Charlotte Herbold.

So. Lown Room, Memorial Union

1:00 - 5:00 pm

Women's Organizational Fair  
F.F.A. Room, Memorial Union

8 pm

Performance - Lucie Blue Trembley  
French Canadian feminist folk singer  
Damn Yankee - Free Admission

Thursday, March 24

9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Book exhibit  
Sutton Lounge, Memorial Union

12:15 - 1:00 pm

Presentation - "Women's Rights  
Roberta Kuriloff & Dianne de Salvo,  
Student Legal Service.  
Sutton Lounge, Memorial Union

8 pm

Keynote - "Is There a Core in the Curriculum: Democracy and Learning"  
Catharine Stimpson, Professor of English, Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Provost for Graduate Education at the New Brunswick campus of Rutgers University.

101 Neville Hall; reception follows

Friday, March 25

12:15 - 1:30 pm

Panel discussion - topic to be announced.

Sutton Lounge, Memorial Union

1:30 - 5:00 pm

Film/video Festival  
Sutton Lounge, Memorial Union

8 pm

Film - "She's Nobody's Baby"  
Coe Lounge, Memorial Union  
Discussion Refreshments

More is being planned. Look for the complete schedule after Spring Break.

SOME WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS IN THE BANGOR-ORONO AREA 1988

(\*Please send information on any women's groups that are not on this list to the WOMEN'S CENTER so they can be listed next time)

WOMEN'S CENTER of the University of Maine  
c/o Memorial Union  
Orono, Maine 04469

Meets every Friday from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Maples on the Orono campus

WOMEN IN THE CURRICULUM PROGRAM (WIC)  
University of Maine  
325 Shibles / Evelyn S. Newlyn, Director  
Orono 04469 Maine

Organizes luncheon series  
Tuesdays 12:15 to 1:30 p.m.  
at Sutton Lounge, Memorial  
Union Building / Write for  
program and information

WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY  
Unitarian Church of Bangor  
126 Union Street  
Bangor 04401 Maine

Meets 1st and 3rd Sunday of  
the month from 6 to 7:30 p.m.  
For further information call  
947-6697

SPRUCE RUN: Services for Abused Women  
and Women in Crisis  
Bangor PO Box 653  
Maine 04401

Telephone: 945-5102  
Hot Line: 947-0496

DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS PROJECT  
Transitions  
Bangor Hall, University College  
Bangor, Maine 04401

Telephone: 581-6132

TUESDAY FORUM: Professional Women's  
Organization and Network  
PO Box 1090  
Bangor, Maine 04401

Luncheons in Bangor  
every Tuesday at noon  
Call or write for information

YWCA  
17 Second Street  
Bangor, Maine 04401

Oldest, largest women's  
organization in the world  
Telephone: 941-2808

NOW - National Organization for Women  
Greater Bangor Chapter  
87 Sunset Strip, Brewer

Telephone: 989-3306

MABEL WADSWORTH WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTER  
Bangor, Maine

Telephone: 947-5337

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN  
Evelyn Dearborn, AAUW President  
Fogler Library 1692  
University of Maine at Orono

AAUW is celebrating the 100th  
year of the founding of its  
Educational Foundation Program



## "AH, WOMEN"

A standing ovation was the response to the performance of "Ah, Women" by Little Flags Theatre. The comical, musical skits featured women triumphing over such issues as ageism, sexism, and handicapism.

Writer/director Maxine Klein said, "How are women depicted, for the most part, in establishment theatre? Stupid, Sometimes over-sexed. Always an object." Klein's characters show the other side, the real side.

The play featured Ellen Field, who has received rave reviews for her work with Little Flags. As a bluesy "Bag Lady" she sang "Enjoy the 'wo' of woman, the 'sh' of she" and "Keep your figure." Field also played a fiesty Mother Jones leading "The Female Mop Brigade."

In a rock parody skit, "Dynamite Eatin' Baby" three women thrust out electric guitars. They sang "Bitch, nag, whine - you can take those words and shove 'em, where the sun don't shine, 'cause I'm sick and tired of 'em."

The five-person ensemble ended their program singing, "We are not an ancient mystery. We are a proud beginning, toward a new humanity."

The Women's Center coordinated the performance that was held in the Pavilion Theater, Friday, Feb. 19.

Susan Hopkins

*An excerpt about recovery...*

*For Cindy Dean*

*And I saw Her, a great white bird whose wing span tip to tip was as broad as the ancient ice sheet and whose feathers were as soft as settling snow. As her feet touched the earth, winter to its vast recesses began to warm and melt, and it was Spring.*

*The land took on the color of Sunday with the blossoming of the apple, cherry and wild pear. Cold hard ground gave way to damp dew and pink trailing flowers laughed throughout the woodland. In her shadow wild birds were warmed, hearts were mended, and children who had long forgotten how to dance did, indeed, dance. Their eyes loved with unleashed merriment long guarded in the secret heart, and tears flowed freely.*

*Nona Famous  
Machias*

## "HER" STORY

*Cont. from page 1*

(refer to insert for a full listing of events). The events are primarily sponsored by the Women in the Curriculum program, but several campus groups and programs have also contributed.

On Monday, March 21 at 8p.m. in Neville Hall, Alice Kessler-Harris, professor of history at Hofstra University will give a presentation entitled "From Policy to Practice: Things we never knew about women's wages." Kessler-Harris worked on the sex descrimination case brought by the Equal Opportunity Commission against Sears, Roebuck & Company, and is the author of *Out of Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States*.

Don't plan anything for Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, because two outstanding performances are scheduled back to back. Tuesday evening, a concert with the Roches (Maggie and Terri and Suzy) will begin at 8p.m. at the Maine Center for the Arts. Admission will be charged. These sisters are one of the most dynamic and funky rock/folk groups around, and you'll be very sorry if you miss this concert. The very next night, Wednesday, at in the Damn Yankee, Lucie Blue Trembley, a French Canadian feminist folksinger will perform for free.

On Thursday, March 24 at 8p.m. at Neville Hall, Catherine Stimpson, professor of English, Dean of the Graduate School of the New Brunswick campus of Rutgers, will deliver the keynote presentation entitled "Is There a Core in the Curriculum: Democracy and Learning." Stimpson was the founding editor of "Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society from 1974-1980." She also was the first director of the Women's Center of Bernard College, and of the Institute for Reasearch on Women at Rutgers.

There will also be an exhibit at the Hudson Museum, "Navajo Women: Artists/ Weavers and Entrepreneurs," and at the Memorial Union of watercolors focusing on Nigerian women and children by Dorothy Hayes, of Brooklin, Maine.

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## RAPE AWARENESS WEEK

According to statistical studies, 90 percent of all rape cases go unreported, and 60 percent of those reported are acquaintance rapes, those where the victim knows her attacker.

Bernice Sandler, in her article, "Friends Raping Friends," states that "The more you know about [rape]... the more likely it is that you can avoid being put into a situation where it can occur."

Knowing more about rape is the focus of the University of Maine's Rape Awareness Week, March 26-31. The week will highlight a free presentation by keynote speaker Bernice Sandler, Executive Director, Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges. Other activities and programs scheduled for the week include a half day conference on acquaintance rape and a variety of workshops and displays at the Memorial Union. The week will conclude on March 31 with a "Take Back the Night March. For more information about the weeks activities, contact Ruth Lockhart or Nancy Price at the Cutler Health Center, University of Maine, or call 581-4013.

The "Take Back the Night" march will gather on the steps of Fogler Library at 6:15 p.m. Candles will be provided. A spaghetti supper and an evening of non-sexist entertainment in the Damn Yankee will follow the march, beginning about 7:00 p.m. Admission is \$3 per person. Proceeds from the supper will go to Spruce Run in Bangor. For more information, contact Chris Bobel at 866-4227, or 581-2013.

### Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Come one, come all to the spaghetti feed on March 31st. Come and Donate your voice in song and spirit. We welcome poets, readers, story tellers, bards and musicians to speak and sing out about social, political and women's issues. The event will celebrate an end to violence against women, and the pervasive influence of violence in this country and world.

We need participants, so please sign up. Contact Kathy Slack at 866-4781, if not home leave your name and telephone number..

## 7 Talismen

Stone. Shell. Glass. Stone. Shell.  
Glass. Bone.

### Women

We dance naked because we want to dance  
naked.  
Bury our bones  
so  
bury our bones  
that way.

### Words

We know. We know. We know. We

### Ways

believe and disbelieve. We dance  
and wait. We sit  
still. Hear. Listen

### Days

to old songs. We know already the bones in the  
sand,  
the voice of blue and white and water  
and birth. We know

### Dyes

fruit and flower.  
Coptis  
Tansy  
Earth Smoke  
for teething.  
for her.  
for evil.

Yellow. Yellow and yellow.  
We listen. We  
hear,

Pokeweed. Bloodroot.

but the words forget  
us

read. Red.

Not Blue. Blue is written

and remembered. Green is-

But red is our stones, our shells, glass.

Our bones are not white.  
Our bones are not gentle  
memories in the sand.  
Our bones are red.

### Deeds

we dance, dance. We scatter,  
splinter. Because green. We want to.  
We have to. We are. Because green

We read. Write. Right. Read.

is red.

Kathleen M. Waters

Loving thanks to Judith Cooper and Jane Thiebaud